Demonstrations are also organized by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) on farmer's fields on 100 percent GoI assistance.

Change in Guidelines for assistance to drought hit States

†257. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:
SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGGARWAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have brought about changes in the existing guidelines for one-time waiver for one year on interest payment for kharif crops to increase the ceiling of agriculture investment subsidy and to provide additional assistance to provide relief to drought hit States;

(b) if so, the complete details of guidelines issued by the Centre; and

(c) the details of the assistance schemes and credit schemes provide/ proposed to be provided by Central Government to the farmers of drought hit States particularly Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The guidelines on One-Time Settlement (OTS) of loans including waiver on interest is framed by the Reserve Bank of India. Reserve Bank of India revises these guidelines from time to time for providing relief to the needy farmers. There are laid down items and norms of expenditure for assistance from relief funds in the wake of natural calamities including drought *i.e.* from Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF). As per the existing guidelines, assistance is admissible to small and marginal farmers for crop loss of 50% and above at the rate of Rs. 1000/- per hectare for rainfed areas, Rs. 2500/- per hectare for irrigated areas and Rs. 4000/- per hectare for perennial crops. Assistance is also admissible to other farmers in case of severe calamity occuring for second consecutive year (or subsequent year) and subject to the condition that the subsidy will be payable at appropriate rate per hectare upto 2 hectares only, irrespective of the size of holding. The matter regarding revision of norms is still under finalisation.

The Government of India announced a comprehensive credit policy on 18th June, 2004, containing measures for doubling of agriculture credit

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

flow in next three years and provision of debt relief to the farmers affected by natural calamities. Following are the highlights of this announcement:

(i) Credit flow to agriculture sector to increase @ 30% per year.

(ii) Debt restructuring in respect of farmers in distress and farmers in arrears providing for rescheduling of outstanding loans over a period of five years including moratorium of two years, thereby making all farmers eligible for fresh credit.

(iii) Special One time Settlement scheme for settling the old and chronic loan accounts of small and marginal farmers.

(iv) Banks allowed to finance for redeeming the loans taken by farmers from private moneylenders.

(v) Commercial Banks to finance @ 100 farmers per branch; 50 lakh new farmers to be financed by the banks in a year.

(vi) Refinements in Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs) and fixation of scale of finance.

Reilef to farmers of Uttar Pradesh

258. DR. PRABHA THAKUR:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have ascertained the facts on the recent media reports on the meager amounts being distributed as relief to farmers in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether Government have also taken cognizance of reported corruption by the local administrative functionary in distributing the relief;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to ensure effective and efficient delivery of the relief aid to the farmers in affected areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA) (a) to (d) There are laid down items and norms of expenditure for assistance from relief funds in the wake of natural calamities *viz.* Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity